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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 THE HAGUE 001697

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AC/CB, NP/CBM, VC/CCB, L/ACV, IO/S  
SECDEF FOR OSD/ISP  
JOINT STAFF FOR DD PMA-A FOR WTC  
COMMERCE FOR BIS (GOLDMAN)  
NSC FOR JOECK  
WINPAC FOR LIEPMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [CWC](#)

SUBJECT: CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC): STATUS OF THE  
VIS ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

This is CWC-85-04.

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SUMMARY  
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1. (U) We discussed the status of the Verification Information System (VIS) Enhancement Project with a number of officials in the Technical Secretariat (TS) on the margins of the June 29-July 2 Executive Council session. The project remains on schedule, although some TS officials expressed concerns and questioned the willingness of the contractor to meet the TS deadlines. Others asserted that the contractor is dictating the terms and timelines of the effort without adequate oversight. TS officials also raised concerns regarding VIS information security, lack of planning for and funding of VIS implementation, and the absence of any plan to publicize the effort to ensure the VIS is endorsed by States Parties. In fact, the Office of Internal Oversight in the TS has recommended that a qualified outside expert do a project audit. Ambassador Javits emphasized to Director General Pfirter and Deputy DG Hawtin that the U.S. places great importance on the timely completion of a fully functioning VIS that addresses all the concerns of users in the TS as well as States Parties. End Summary.

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SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY  
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2. (U) Rob Simpson, head of the Office of Confidentiality and Security (OCS) and a member of the VIS project management team chaired by the Deputy DG Brian Hawtin, provided his opinion that the VIS would not be deployed on the Secure Critical Network (SCN) by December 2004. Thus, the fourth security audit team (SAT-IV) may not be able to do a full audit of SCN/VIS before the end of their 2004 mandate. Simpson stressed adequate security needed to be part of the development effort, although this element of the VIS project remains unfunded. Simpson noted that the OCS-requested VIS requirements have not been provided to the TS, although the contractor (Sitar, Inc.) charged 80,000 euros for a paper explaining why it was not going to provide them.

3. (U) SAT-IV review of the VIS before its deployment to the SCN would be useful, agreed Simpson, citing delegations' concerns about how the VIS would protect their highly sensitive information. Simpson has provided the head of SAT-IV (Harada, Japan) 11 security-related VIS documents drafted by Information Systems Branch (ISB). Harada is to disseminate these documents to SAT-IV for their consideration of VIS security aspects. Simpson also said that ISB initially had requested a security gap analysis from the contractor without OCS involvement, and that currently there is a Memorandum of Understanding between OCS and ISB regarding the VIS design providing specifications on how security is to be done.

4. (U) Simpson reported that the target of the initial VIS project is the Verification Division's Declaration Branch. Addition of facility inspections to the Relational Database Management System (RDBMS) reporting will be a follow-on effort. Simpson relayed that the contractor failed to provide a cost estimate and timeline to the revised Statement of Work (SoW) by June 17, delaying negotiation of the follow-on contract by a month. (Note: this had yet to be received as of July 6.) There apparently is speculation that the contractor is balking at the new SoW, and wants the contract scaled back.

5. (U) The SCN upgrade to Windows 2000, continued Simpson, would probably take place in early fall 2004 because Microsoft will no longer support NT4 as of January 1, 2005. As OCS does not expect the RDBMS to be deployed on the SCN until late 2004 at the earliest, there is no need to do it this summer. The upgrade will be completed by the December 1-6 visit of SAT-IV. Simpson noted that SAT-IV would do a full audit of the SCN at that time, using ISO 17999 to

organize its approach to the audit.

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VERIFICATION DIVISION AND INSPECTORATE  
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16. (U) Horst Reeps, Head of the Verification Division, and Carlos Trentadue, Acting Head of the Inspectorate, both of whom are on the VIS Project Management Team, expressed frustration at the current state of the project. Reeps reported that in the last two months, he and Trentadue have sent four memoranda to the DDG, protesting that after a year, they have only paper charts and diagrams while what they need is a functional VIS. Trentadue added that although the two groups have provided about 800 person-hours to the effort, as yet they have seen nothing tangible. Reeps commented that the entire approach is too erratic, there are too many intermediate levels of command, and a supervisor desperately is needed.

17. (U) Reeps and Trentadue reported that after numerous meetings with the contractor, and equally numerous requests for a timeline for planning purposes, they have yet to see anything specific. They need to plan so they can train relevant staff members on VIS use and find the funds and support to hire four or five Technical Assistance Contractors (TACs) with language skills and appropriate security clearances to manually enter the historical industry declaration data into the VIS. There currently is no provision for this effort in the 2005 budget, although the full implementation of VIS supposedly will take place in mid-2005.

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INFORMATION SERVICES BRANCH  
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18. (U) Greg Linden, Chief of the Information Systems Branch, presented the status of and the plan for completion of first phase of the VIS project. He announced that as of July 1 the contractor has provided the TS four products:

- the RDBMS (completed and provided to the TS two months ago);
- the country maintenance database which will be available on the OPCW website with a list of States Parties names and their TS country codes;
- the chemical verifier database which will be available on the OPCW website with a standard list of chemical names and their CAS numbers; and
- an automated list of declaration handbook formats in pull-down menu format (the CTFS in TS clothing) which will also be provided to States Parties via the OPCW website.

19. (U) Linden reported that the VIS project management board meets about every six weeks, to assess the status of the project. He admitted that a detailed schedule had yet to be provided to board members, but that this will be a requirement of the next contract with Sitar, Inc. When asked when users would be able to test-drive the system with mock data, Linden reported that Verification Division users would have access in the September/October timeframe. Delegations would be able to check the VIS system in late 2004.

110. (U) When asked whether an off-the-shelf RDBMS might have been preferable, Linden responded that such products would not be able to incorporate the various copies of the data needed by the TS: a digital legacy copy with errors as provided as well as a "corrected" copy, which would be a working mirror of information provided by States Parties. In addition, industrial declaration data builds on declarations beginning in 1997, and in order to be of value, these declarations also must be manually entered into the VIS. This effort will require up to six TAC linguists who can be cleared to handle classified data.

111. (U) When asked about the status of the TS note announcing the VIS project, Linden reported there had been an administrative snafu, but the draft was moving through the process and should be published in July. We emphasized the importance of the paper for delegations to build support in capitols for electronic submissions of industry declarations.

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AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DEPUTY DG  
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112. (U) Ambassador Javits and delegation reps met with DDG Hawtin on July 2 and relayed concerns about the negative feedback we had received on the margins of the EC. Javits inquired about the status of the TS VIS note, and made clear that disseminating it as soon as possible was a U.S. priority. The DDG noted the strides made by Linden towards deployment of a fully operational and functional VIS that would meet the needs of users within the TS as well as States Parties. Hawtin asked that the delegation forget the inadequate efforts made between 1993 and 2002, and should focus instead on the enormous progress made since Linden

joined the TS. For over a decade no progress had been made, while over the past year, the TS had received a functional RDBMS and will have a working VIS prototype by the end of the summer.

113. (U) The DDG characterized the critics in the TS as negative influences who did not have suggestions on how to improve the project. Hawtin noted that a hoax e-mail originating from someone in OCS had resulted in an inquiry from OCS, ISB and the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) into the VIS project, with the OIO recommending that a qualified outside expert do a project audit. In response, the DDG tasked ISB and OCS to provide a written response to the charges contained in the hoax e-mail, to provide the basis for a DDG recommendation to DG Pfirter on the need for a project audit. With regard to the Verification Division's request for four TACs to manually enter historical industry declaration data into the RDBMS, Hawtin commented that he did not include it in the 2005 budget because, being a priority for the declaration branch, it should come from the funds available to the division in 2005. Finally, the DDG promised to look into the draft VIS paper and ensure that it be published expeditiously.

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AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSION WITH DG PFIRTER  
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114. (U) Ambassador Javits met with the DG on July 2 and noted the delegation's request that the VIS paper be published quickly. Javits also expressed U.S. support for the VIS project and inquired whether funding would be available to complete the first stage of the VIS effort. The DG was noncommittal, but confirmed that the project was a TS priority. The DG also agreed to ensure the VIS paper would be disseminated shortly.

115. (U) Ito sends.  
SOBEL